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DOCTOR STRANGE
SHE'S DEAD! AND ALL MY POWER COULDN'T SAVE HER!
ASRAEL, ANGEL OF DEATH!
BOB LAYTON

Once he was a man like most *others*— a *worldly* man, seduced and jaded by *material* things. But then he discovered the *separate* reality, where *sorcery* and *men's souls* shaped the forces that shape our *lives*. In that instant, he was *born again*, to become a man like no other!

Stan Lee Presents: Dr. STRANGE MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS!™

CHRIS CLAREMONT	GENE COLAN	DAN GREEN & RICARDO VILLAMONTE	MARK ROGAN	BOB SHAREN	JO DUFFY	ALLEN MILGROM	JIM SHOOTER
WRITER	PENCILER	INKERS	LETTERER	COLORIST	EDITOR	CONSULTING ED.	ED.-IN-CHIEF

DAWN OF DEATH!

OUR SETTING IS THE PARIS HOME OF LORD JULIAN PHYFFE--MILLIONAIRE BY BIRTH, BUSINESSMAN BY PROFESSION, SORCERER BY CHOICE. THE TIME IS THE WITCHING HOUR, THE SITUATION... SPEAKS FOR ITSELF.

LORD PHYFFE--I HAVE COME FOR YOU!!

WHAT?! YOU!!

BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! I WAS TOLD--YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD!

LF 36

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AS THE SAYING GOES, REPORTS OF MY DEATH HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT... EXAGGERATED.
YOU SET A TRAP FOR ME, PHYFFE. YOU SOUGHT MY DEATH AND, IN THE PROCESS, MURDERED ONE OF MY OLDEST FRIENDS.*
I TRUSTED YOU, YET NOW I LEARN THAT YOU SERVE MY ARCH-FOE, BARON MORDO. I WANT TO KNOW WHY!!
* SEE LAST ISH.--JO.

I'VE NEVER SEEN DR. STRANGE SO GRIM, SO ANGRY. HE'S LIKE SOME ELEMENTAL FORCE--HE'S NOT HUMAN!
I'VE STOPPED HIM BEFORE.
M-MORDO PLANS TO OPEN THE SEVEN GATES OF CHAOS. HE SAYS YOU CANNOT STOP HIM.
NOT THIS TIME! IN RETURN FOR SERVING HIM, MORDO PROMISED TO SAVE ME WHEN HE COMPLETED HIS SPELL AND... DESTROYED THE EARTH.

AND YOU BELIEVED HIM?! PHYFFE, HE'S USING YOU!
YOU ARE NO MORE THAN A TOOL TO MORDO, TO BE DISCARDED AS SOON AS HE'S FINISHED WITH YOU.

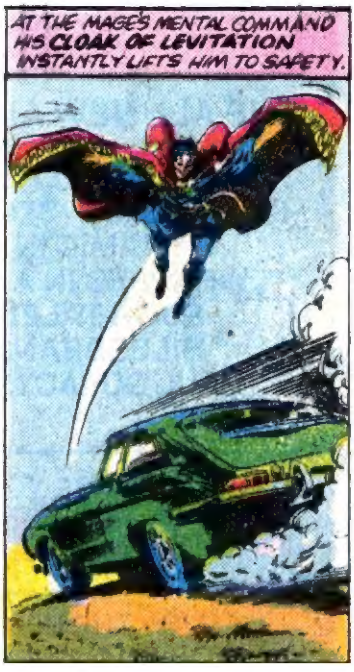
BUT THERE'S STILL TIME, STILL HOPE, HELP ME, PHYFFE--TELL ME WHERE MORDO IS--!
NO! I'LL TELL YOU NOTHING!!
A BOLT OF BEDEVILMENT!
I ANTICIPATED TROUBLE, BUT EVEN SO I BARELY PARRIED PHYFFE'S STRIKE WITH THE SHIELD OF THE SERAPHIM IN TIME
THE SUDDEN ATTACK--FAR MORE POWERFUL THAN ANY SPELL THE MAGE HAS EVER SEEN PHYFFE CAST BEFORE--THROWS STRANGE MOMENTARILY OFF-BALANCE.

THAT MOMENT IS ALL PHYFFE NEEDS.
HE WAS THROWING A PARTY WHEN STRANGE ARRIVED...
...AND STARTLED GUESTS AND SERVANTS SCATTER, OR ARE KNOCKED ASIDE, AS THEIR HOST BURSTS OUT OF HIS STUDY AND THROUGH THEIR MIDST...

...WITH DR. STRANGE HOT ON HIS HEELS.
I COULDN'T CAST ANY MAJOR SPELLS INSIDE THE HOUSE. THERE WERE TOO MANY PEOPLE ABOUT...

...TOO MUCH RISK OF AN INNOCENT BEING CAUGHT IN THE MYSTIC CROSSFIRE. BUT NOW -
MOUNDS OF HOGGOTH!
HA! YOUR SPELL HAD NO EFFECT! YOU'LL NEVER CATCH ME, STRANGE --MORDO WILL SEE TO THAT!

SOME ARCANE AURA IS PROTECTING PHYFFE...
HIS CAR-- HE'S TRYING TO RUN ME DOWN!


AT THE MAGE'S MENTAL COMMAND HIS CLOAK OF LEVITATION INSTANTLY LIFTS HIM TO SAFETY.

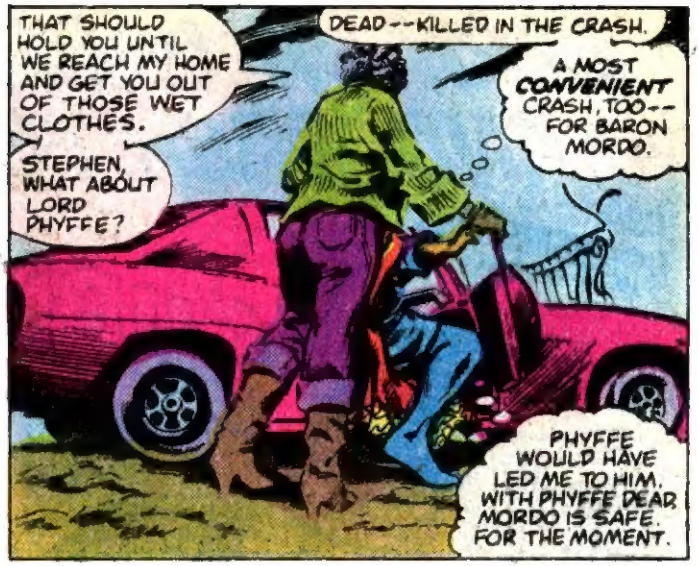
AND THE CHASE BEGINS ANEW.
PHYFFE DRIVES LIKE A MADMAN THROUGH THE DESERTED STREETS OF PARIS, BUT TRY AS HE MIGHT, HE CAN'T SHAKE DR. STRANGE.

WHAT AM I GOING TO DO? STRANGE IS SORCERER SUPREME! EVEN WITH THE EXTRA KNOWLEDGE AND POWERS MORDO GAVE ME, I CAN'T HOLD HIM OFF FOREVER.
MORDO--HEAR ME! I'VE SERVED YOU FAITHFULLY, DONE ALL YOU ASKED AND MORE!
HELP ME, MORDO-- PLEASE! I BEG YOU--SAVE ME!

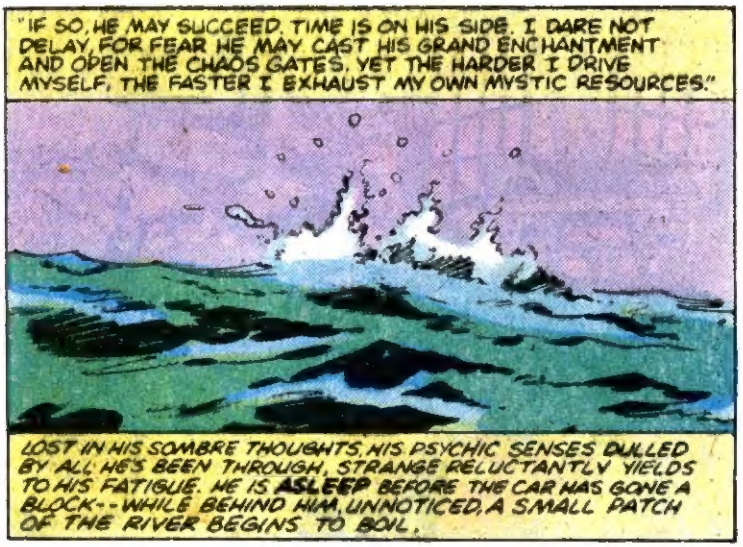
WHA--?! THE STEERING WHEEL'S GOING CRAZY! IT'S SPINNING OUT OF MY HANDS!
I CAN'T CONTROL IT!
THE CAR SKIDS VIOLENTLY ON THE RAIN-SLICK PAVEMENT, BEFORE SHOOTING LIKE A ROCKET OFF THE ROADWAY AND INTO THE RIVER SEINE.
YEEAAAGHK!
THE LAST THING PHYFFE HEARS--BESIDES HIS OWN TERRIFIED SCREAM, OF COURSE--IS THE SOUND OF HIS MASTER'S VOICE.
BARON MORDO IS LAUGHING.
PHYFFE!
SPLASH
I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT. HE WAS DRIVING WITH THE SKILL OF A GRAND PRIX CHAMPION. WHAT CAUSED THAT CRASH?!
IF I WERE FRESH AND UNTIRED, AND MY MYSTIC POWERS WERE AT THIER PEAK, I'D BE ABLE TO LIFT THE CAR FROM THE SEINE.
BUT I'M NOT FRESH--AND I EXPENDED MOST OF MY STRENGTH EARLIER TONIGHT, ESCAPING FROM PHYFFE'S TRAP.
SO, IF I'M TO SAVE HIM...
...I'LL HAVE TO DO IT THE OLD-FASHIONED--HARD--WAY. THIS WATER IS SO COLD...
NO! THE CAR'S SINKING!

IT'S DROPPING LIKE A STONE. IF I DON'T SAVE PHYFFE ON THE FIRST TRY, IT WILL BE TOO LATE.
MY LUNGS ARE ALREADY STARTING TO BURN FROM LACK OF AIR. I'VE BEEN NEGLECTING MY EXERCISES LATELY--I'M OUT OF CONDITION.
DOOR'S LOCKED! NO TIME TO WASTE!
I'LL CONJURE UP A SMALL WATER ELEMENTAL USE IT TO BURST THE LOCK--THERE!
PHYFFE? OH, NO--HIS NECK'S BROKEN. HE MUST HAVE DIED THE MOMENT HIS CAR HIT THE WATER.
MY "DRAMATIC" RESCUE ATTEMPT WAS ALL FOR NOTHING.
SECONDS PASS, AND THEN...
AIR!-
ALMOST... DIDN'T REACH THE... SURFACE--WEIGHT... OF WATER-SOAKED TUNIC KEPT PULLING ME DOWN.
AND... SO DARK--COULDN'T TELL IF I WAS TEN FEET DOWN.. OR A HUNDRED.
WITH SLOW, DELIBERATE, STROKES, STRANGE SWIMS TOWARDS THE EMBANKMENT...
TOO... WEAK TO PULL MYSELF OUT. NEED MOMENT TO CATCH MY BREATH... BUT COLD... SAPPING MY STRENGTH--LONGER I STAY IN... RIVER... WEAKER I GET...
HE GRITS HIS TEETH FOR ANOTHER TRY, WHEN...
TAKE MY HAND, STEPHEN! I'LL HELP YOU.
MADELEINE!
THE VISHANTI BE PRAISED!
I'M SORRY I TOOK SO LONG TO FIND YOU. THE CURRENT SWEPT YOU FARTHER DOWN-STREAM THAN I HAD ANTICIPATED.
IT'S ALL... RIGHT.
I'M JUST GLAD I HAD YOU FOLLOW ME WHEN I CONFRONTED LORD PHYFFE.

YOU'RE SHAKING!
I... AM... COLD.
HERE. IT'S HOT TEA, LACED WITH HONEY AND LEMON.

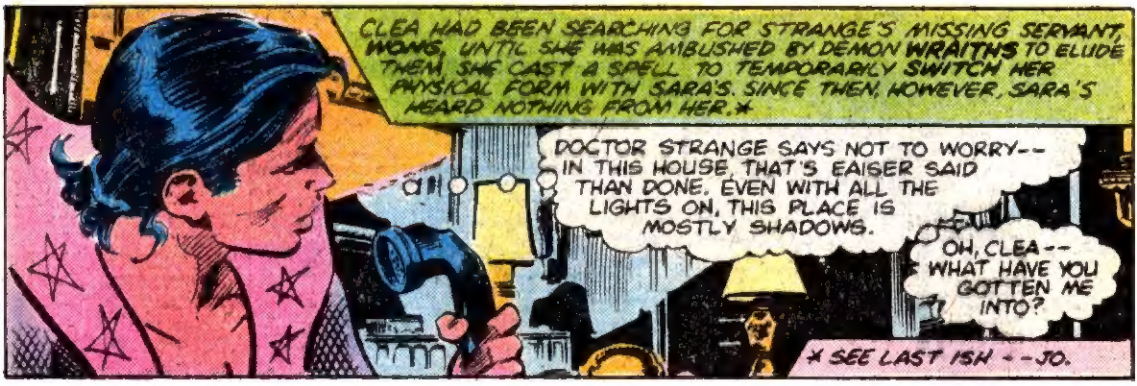

THAT SHOULD HOLD YOU UNTIL WE REACH MY HOME AND GET YOU OUT OF THOSE WET CLOTHES.
STEPHEN, WHAT ABOUT LORD PHYFFE?
DEAD--KILLED IN THE CRASH.
A MOST CONVENIENT CRASH, TOO--FOR BARON MORDO.
PHYFFE WOULD HAVE LED ME TO HIM. WITH PHYFFE DEAD, MORDO IS SAFE. FOR THE MOMENT.

AND WHEN I FIND HIM, WHAT THEN? SO MUCH HAS HAPPENED RECENTLY--I'VE FOUGHT TOO MANY BATTLES, WITH TOO LITTLE TIME BETWEEN THEM TO RECOVER.
IS THAT PART OF MORDO'S PLAN? TO WEAR ME DOWN UNTIL I'M NO LONGER A MATCH FOR HIM?


"IF SO, HE MAY SUCCEED. TIME IS ON HIS SIDE. I DARE NOT DELAY, FOR FEAR HE MAY CAST HIS GRAND ENCHANTMENT AND OPEN THE CHAOS GATES. YET THE HARDER I DRIVE MYSELF, THE FASTER I EXHAUST MY OWN MYSTIC RESOURCES."
LOST IN HIS SOMBRE THOUGHTS, HIS PSYCHIC SENSES DULLED BY ALL HE'S BEEN THROUGH, STRANGE RELUCTANTLY YIELDS TO HIS FATIGUE. HE IS ASLEEP BEFORE THE CAR HAS GONE A BLOCK--WHILE BEHIND HIM, UNNOTICED, A SMALL PATCH OF THE RIVER BEGINS TO BOIL.

A MOMENT LATER, A HUMAN FORM BREAKS THE SURFACE--LORD JULIAN PHYFFE.
"ARISE, LORD PHYFFE! THY MALEVOLENT MASTER, MORDO, SUMMONS THEE!
"THOUGH THY FLESH BE DEAD, THY SPIRIT-SOUL FLED--STILL WILT THOU SERVE ME!
"ARISE, SLAVE--AND WALK THE EARTH ONCE MORE!

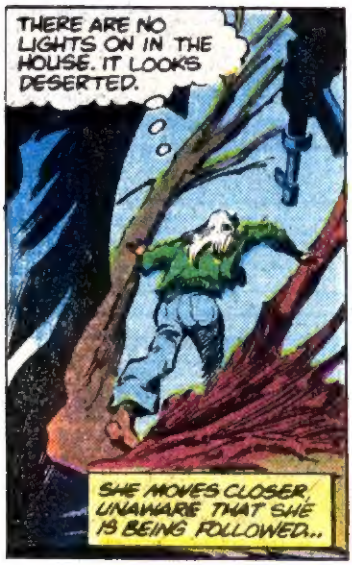
WITH HALTING, STUMBLING STEPS, THE ANIMATED CORPSE MAKES IT'S WAY ASHORE, TOWARDS A BLINDING NIMBUS OF LIGHT.
FOR ALL IT'S BRILLIANCE, HOWEVER, THE LIGHT GOES UNSEEN BY THOSE LIVING ALONG THE WATERFRONT, AND MORDO'S BOOMING BASSO VOICE GOES UNHEARD.
STRANGE SPOKE THE TRUTH, FOOL--I HAD NO INTENTION OF SAVING YOU. WHY SHOULD I? YOU ARE MERELY A PAWN.
I AM MORDO.
AND AT THE MOMENT, LORD PHYFFE, YOU ARE OF FAR MORE USE TO ME DEAD THAN ALIVE--THAT IS WHY I SLEW YOU WHEN YOU BEGGED MY HELP. BEHOLD, GREEDY ONE, AS I GRANT YOU WHAT YOU HAVE EVER LUSTED FOR BUT NEVER POSSESSED--POWER ABSOLUTE!
I CHRISTEN YOU AZRAEL, AFTER THE HEBRAIC ANGEL OF DEATH
FOR DEATH YOU SHALL BE--TO DR. STRANGE!
GO, SLAVE! YOUR UNDEAD FORM WILL NEVER REST, NEVER KNOW PEACE, UNTIL THE SO-CALLED MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS IS NO MORE!
ON THAT NOTE, LET'S SHIFT OUR SCENE AHEAD A FEW HOURS...
...AND WESTWARD 3,000,000 MILES TO BLEEKER STREET IN NEW YORK'S FAMED GREENWICH VILLAGE, WHERE WE FIND THE HOME OF DOCTOR STRANGE...
...INHABITED THIS MORNING BY A MOST UNUSUAL YOUNG WOMAN.
RING
HER NAME IS SARA WOLFE, AND SHE IS DR. STRANGE'S NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOR.
HELLO? OH, DR. STRANGE--THANK HEAVEN IT'S YOU!
CLEA ISN'T HERE, I'M AFRAID. SHE'S... GONE.
BRIEFLY, SARA EXPLAINS HOW SHE RAN INTO CLEA THE DAY BEFORE, IN CHINATOWN.


CLEA HAD BEEN SEARCHING FOR STRANGE'S MISSING SERVANT, WONG, UNTIL SHE WAS AMBUSHED BY DEMON WRAITHS TO ELUDE THEM, SHE CAST A SPELL TO TEMPORARILY SWITCH HER PHYSICAL FORM WITH SARA'S. SINCE THEN, HOWEVER, SARA'S HEARD NOTHING FROM HER.*
DOCTOR STRANGE SAYS NOT TO WORRY-- IN THIS HOUSE, THAT'S EAISER SAID THAN DONE. EVEN WITH ALL THE LIGHTS ON, THIS PLACE IS MOSTLY SHADOWS.
OH, CLEA-- WHAT HAVE YOU GOTTEN ME INTO?
* SEE LAST ISH -- JO.

"WHEREVER YOU ARE, I HOPE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT."
AT THE MOMENT, CLEA IS 200 MILES NORTH OF THE CITY, DEEP IN THE ADIRON-DACK FOREST PRESERVE, WHERE THE FULL MOON SHINES DOWN ON A MAG-NIFICENT MOUNTAINTOP MANSION.

SHE'S GOTTEN THIS FAR USING CASH FROM STRANGE'S SAFE -- FOLLOWING A TENUOUS PSYCHIC TRAIL LEFT BY WONG, AS HIS KIDNAPPERS BROUGHT HIM TO THIS REMOTE, WILDERNESS ESTATE.
OHHHHH-- I ACHE.

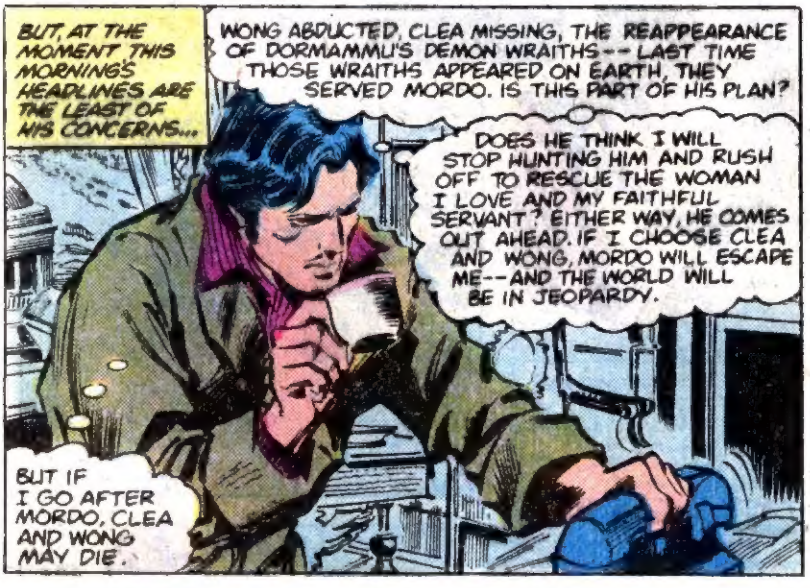
THIS SETTLES IT-- WHEN STEPHEN RETURNS, I MUST HAVE HIM TEACH ME HOW TO OPERATE AN AUTOMOBILE. IF I'D HAD MY OWN TRANSPORTATION, I COULD HAVE BEEN HERE HOURS AGO.


THERE ARE NO LIGHTS ON IN THE HOUSE. IT LOOKS DESERTED.
SHE MOVES CLOSER, UNAWARE THAT SHE IS BEING FOLLOWED..

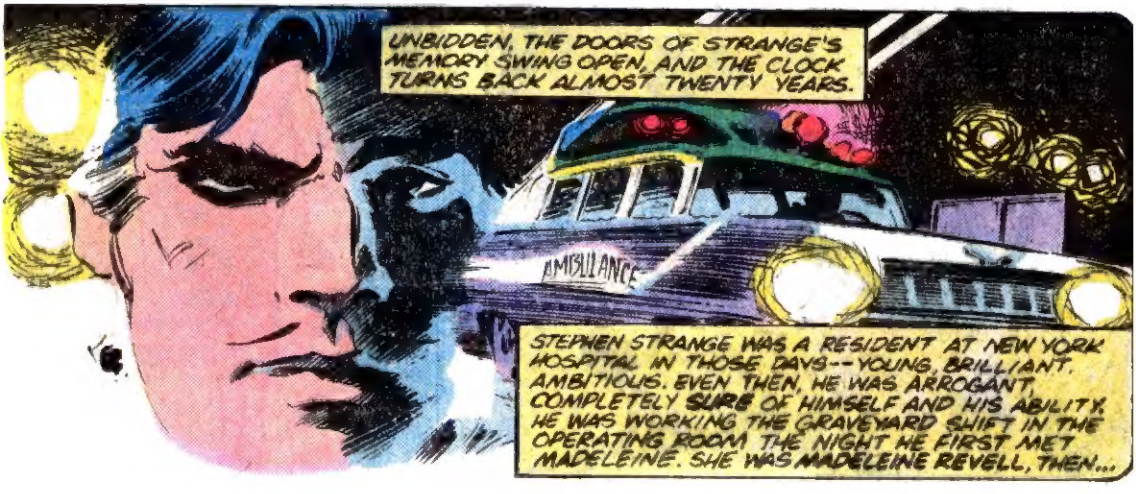
...UNTIL...
EH--?!?
SNAP

SHRAK!

IT'S NIGHT IN NEW YORK, BUT SUNRISE IN PARIS...
Herald Tribune
Mysterious Disappearances Plague Central Florida Town Ten Near Citrusville In Recent Weeks
...AND, LIKE MANY OTHER AMERICANS ABROAD, STEPHEN STRANGE STARTS THE NEW DAYS WITH A COPY OF THE INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE.


BUT, AT THE MOMENT THIS MORNING'S HEADLINES ARE THE LEAST OF HIS CONCERNS...
WONG ABDUCTED, CLEA MISSING, THE REAPPEARANCE OF DORMAMMU'S DEMON WRAITHS -- LAST TIME THOSE WRAITHS APPEARED ON EARTH, THEY SERVED MORDO. IS THIS PART OF HIS PLAN?
DOES HE THINK I WILL STOP HUNTING HIM AND RUSH OFF TO RESCUE THE WOMAN I LOVE AND MY FAITHFUL SERVANT? EITHER WAY, HE COMES OUT AHEAD. IF I CHOOSE CLEA AND WONG, MORDO WILL ESCAPE ME -- AND THE WORLD WILL BE IN JEOPARDY.
BUT IF I GO AFTER MORDO, CLEA AND WONG MAY DIE.

MY DUTY... OR MY LOVE -- A CHOICE I'VE FACED BEFORE.
THESE PHOTOGRAPHS -- MADELEINE... HER HUSBAND...
...HER CHILDREN.


UNBIDDEN, THE DOORS OF STRANGE'S MEMORY SWING OPEN, AND THE CLOCK TURNS BACK ALMOST TWENTY YEARS.
AMBULANCE
STEPHEN STRANGE WAS A RESIDENT AT NEW YORK HOSPITAL IN THOSE DAYS -- YOUNG, BRILLIANT, AMBITIOUS. EVEN THEN, HE WAS ARROGANT, COMPLETELY SURE OF HIMSELF AND HIS ABILITY. HE WAS WORKING THE GRAVEYARD SHIFT IN THE OPERATING ROOM THE NIGHT HE FIRST MET MADELEINE. SHE WAS MADELEINE REVELL, THEN...

...A TRANSLATOR AT THE UNITED NATIONS.
SHE WAS ALSO THE ONLY SURVIVOR OF A MULTI-CAR SMASH-UP ON THE E.D.R. DRIVE. THE STAFF WAS SURPRISED TO FIND HER STILL BREATHING AS THEY RUSHED HER INTO THE HOSPITAL
STRANGE WENT TO WORK AT ONCE. MADELEINE ALMOST DIED TWICE ON HIS OPERATING TABLE, AND EACH TIME HE BROUGHT HER BACK. SHE WAS IN SURGERY FOR HOURS.
THOSE WHO'D GIVEN UP ON HER, WHO SAID SHE HADN'T A PRAYER, CALLED IT A MIRACLE WHEN STRANGE WHEELED HER OUT OF THE OPERATING ROOM--ALIVE.
HE SAW HER OFTEN DURING HER RECOVERY, AND KEPT SEEING HER AFTER SHE LEFT THE HOSPITAL AND RETURNED TO HER JOB. FOR A YEAR THEY WERE INSEPARABLE.
IN THE SPRING, IN THEIR FAVORITE GREENWICH VILLAGE SIDEWALK CAFE, HE ASKED HER TO MARRY HIM.
NON, STEPHEN.
I LOVE YOU, TOO, MON CHER... BUT I WILL NOT MARRY YOU.
WHY NOT?!!
EISU
BECAUSE I DO NOT LIKE THE MAN YOU ARE BECOMING. YOUR MEDICAL SKILL IS AWESOME, YET YOU USE IT TO ENRICH YOURSELF, NOT TO HELP OTHERS. YOU CARE NOTHING FOR PEOPLE, ONLY FOR THEIR MONEY.

"SHE BROKE MY HEART--YET PART OF ME WAS GLAD TO SEE HER GO. I WAS SO CONSUMED WITH GREED THAT I DIDN'T WANT TO SHARE MY GROWING WEALTH WITH ANYONE.
WHAT A FOOL I WAS.
A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS, STEPHEN.
THEY WERE OF YOU, AND US. OF WHAT WAS
AND OF WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN? I WAS THINKING OF THAT MYSELF.
STEPHEN, WHAT EXACTLY ARE THESE "CHAOS GATES"?
PART OF AN ANCIENT SPELL THAT CAN BE USED TO REVERSE THE SEVEN DAYS OF GENESIS, ONE GATE TO A DAY. THE FIRST GATE SETS EVERYTHING IN MOTION. ONCE IT IS OPENED, AND THE DEMON WITHIN IS UNLEASHED, IT CAN NEVER BE CLOSED.
THE SECOND GATE COUNTERS GENESIS' SIXTH DAY. ITS DEMON WILL DESTROY HUMANITY--ALONG WITH EVERY OTHER LIVING THING ON EARTH.
IS SUCH A THING POSSIBLE?! DOES EVEN BARON MORDO HAVE SUCH POWER?!?
MORDO AND I WERE BOTH PUPILS OF THE LEGENDARY ANCIENT ONE. HAD MORDO NOT TURNED TO EVIL, HE MIGHT WELL HAVE BECOME SORCERER SUPREME IN MY PLACE
THE SPELL REQUIRES THE SACRIFICE OF A COVEN--13 PEOPLE, ALL POSSESSING SIGNIFICANT MYSTIC ABILITY OR POTENTIAL THE DEMON OF THE FIRST GATE CONSUMES THEM BODY AND SOUL.
ALSO, THESE SACRIFICES MUST OCCUR IN A PLACE OF GREAT OCCULT POWER--LIKE STONEHENGE, FOR EXAMPLE, OR THE T'SI-NIN CAVES IN CHINA.
BELIEVE ME, MADELEINE. HE HAS THE POWER. AND WITH THE BOOK HE STOLE FROM THE VATICAN, THE KNOWLEDGE.

WITHOUT LORD PHYFFE TO LEAD US TO MORDO, WE'LL HAVE TO SEARCH EACH SUCH PLACE.
PERHAPS NOT. I LEARNED THAT RECENTLY, PHYFFE'S BEEN MAKING AN UNUSUAL NUMBER OF BUSINESS TRIPS TO FLORIDA.
FLORIDA?! OF COURSE!
CURSE ME FOR A NOVICE! THE ANSWER WAS RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME ALL THE TIME!
SEE HERE IN THE TRIBUNE--MULTIPLE DISAPPEARANCES IN CITRUSVILLE.
A TOWN THAT SITS ON THE EDGE OF THE NEXUS OF ALL REALITIES"--
--A DIMENSIONAL CROSSROADS THAT IS CHARGED WITH ONE OF THE HIGHEST CONCENTRATIONS OF ARCANE ENERGY ON THIS PLANET!
BY THE ETERNAL--- THAT SCREAM!
EEEEEEE
IT'S A WOMAN'S VOICE!
STEPHEN, IT'S MY MAID, COLETTE!
COLETTE JOUBERT BURSTS THROUGH THE DOOR OF THE SITTING ROOM, SCREAMING LIKE A TRAPPED ANIMAL! HER EYES ARE MAD WITH TERROR AS SHE STRUGGLES TO FREE HERSELF FROM THE GRIP OF SOMEONE, OR SOMETHING, IN THE ROOM BEYOND.
MADAME! MADAME! AIDE-MOI!
<FOR GOD'S SAKE, HELP ME--- OR I DIE!>
SHE STRUGGLES IN VAIN.
MADAME!!
EVEN AS THE WOMAN SPEAKS HER YOUTH BEGINS TO FADE, HER BEAUTY WITHER. SHE AGES DECADES IN A MATTER OF SECONDS AND--- BEFORE STRANGE AND MADELEINE'S STUNNED, DISBELIEVING EYES---

--COLETTE JOUBERT, AGE 19, RETURNS TO THE DUST FROM WHENCE SHE CAME.
AAAIII
GREETINGS MAGE. ONCE YOU KNEW ME AS LORD PHYFFE. BECAUSE OF YOU I DIED. NOW I AM HERE TO REPAY YOU.
I AM AZRAEL--
--AND MY TOUCH IS DEATH!
Oh, Colette.-- Oh, my poor Colette.
THIS MUST BE MORDO'S DOING!
I MUST STRIKE NOW, WITH ALL MY POWER.
AT STRANGE'S COMMAND, A BEAM OF ELDRITCH ENERGY ERUPTS FROM HIS OUTSTRETCHED HAND, ENVELOPING AZRAEL IN A COCOON OF GOLDEN LIGHT.
BY THE HOARY HOST OF HOGGOTH, BY THE FLAWLESS FALTINE'S FLAME, LET THY WICKED POWER VANISH! GO THOU BACK TO WHENCE THOU CAME!
AZRAEL MAKES NO MOVE TO DEFEND HIMSELF. HE MERELY LAUGHS...

...AS HIS GOLDEN PRISON TURNS RED, THEN BLACK, AND FINALLY, IMPOSSIBLY, SHATTERS!
CAST ONE SPELL, WIZARD--CAST ONE THOUSAND--IT WILL MAKE NO DIFFERENCE.
FOR ALL SPELLS, NO MATTER HOW POTENT, WEAKEN WITH AGE.
AND ALL THINGS AGE AT AZRAEL'S TOUCH.
YOU CANNOT DEFEAT ME...
...AND I WILL NOT LET YOU ESCAPE!
AZRAEL--COUNTER-ATTACKING WITH A SPELL!
BUT HOW CAN THAT BE?! PHYFFE SHOULD HAVE LOST HIS MYSTIC POWERS WHEN HE WAS TRANSFORMED!
IN STOPPING TO PONDER, STRANGE MAY HAVE MADE A FATAL MISTAKE. AZRAEL HAS CONJURED THE CRIMSON BANDS OF CYTTORAK.
HOWEVER, THAT SPELL IS AIMED, NOT AT STRANGE, BUT AT HIS CLOAK OF LEVITATION AND AWESOME EYE OF AGAMOTTO. IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, THEY'RE SEALD WITHIN A NIGH-IMPENETRABLE FORCE FIELD.
STEPHEN--LOOK!
MORDO'S FACE--AN ASTRAL PROJECTION! SO THAT'S HOW THE SPELL WAS CAST.
MORDO WAS STRIKING AT ME THROUGH HIS PAWN! IN ONE STROKE HE'S DEPRIVED ME OF MY STRONGEST TOOLS. SO LONG AS I FACE AZRAEL, I HAVEN'T THE TIME OR STRENGTH NEEDED TO RETRIVE THEM.
'FORE THE GATHERING DOOM MAY MY POWER NOT YIELD--
LET THE WINDS OF WATOOMB STRENGTHEN SERAPHIM'S SHIELD!

STRANGE HOPED THAT HIS MYSTIC SHIELD WOULD BUY HIM SOME TIME TO THINK, PLAN, PREPARE. AGAINST ANY OTHER FOE, IT MIGHT HAVE
AGAINST AZRAEL, IT'S A WASTED EFFORT.
THERE'S A LIMIT TO MY POWER. THERE SEEMS TO BE NONE TO AZRAEL'S. HE SEEMS INVINCIBLE.
BUT THAT'S OUT OF CHARACTER FOR MORDO. HE WOULD NEVER CREATE A SERVANT WHOSE POWER MIGHT SOMEDAY THREATEN HIM. HE MUST HAVE GIVEN AZRAEL A WEAKNESS, AN ACHILLES HEEL.
THE VISHANTI GRANT I LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO FIND IT.
PALL OF DARKNESS--GRAVELIKE GLOOM--ENSHROUD THIS THING THAT SEEKS MY DOOM!
THE PEA-SOUP FOG DOESN'T LAST LONG--STRANGE NEVER MEANT IT TO--AND WHEN IT FADES...
VERY GOOD, STRANGE. YOU SEEK TO CONFUSE ME, TO SLOW ME DOWN, BY USING THE IMAGES OF IKONN--
--TO CREATE SCORES OF DUPLICATES OF YOURSELF AND THE WOMAN.
YOU ONLY DELAY THE INEVITABLE, FOOL!
SOONER OR LATER, I WILL FIND YOU.
AND WITH YOUR DEATH, MORDO WILL RELEASE ME TO MY ETERNAL REST.

THOSE IMAGES WON'T KEEP AZRAEL OCCUPIED FOR LONG.
I KNOW. STAND BACK, WHILE I SEAL THE DOOR.
SCARED MADELEINE?
YES. AND YOU, CHERI?
OF COURSE BUT NOT DISCOURAGED.
HE SMILES AND, SEEING THAT, SHE SMILES -- AND FOR A MOMENT, THEY ARE BOTH YOUNG AGAIN, AND IN LOVE. MADELEINE TRUSTS THE MAGE WITH ALL HER HEART, AND HE VOWS NOT TO BETRAY THAT TRUST.
COME WHAT MAY, HE WILL SAVE HER.
AT THAT MOMENT, OUT ON THE BOULEVARD, SIRENS HERALD THE ARRIVAL OF THE LOCAL POLICE, SUMMONED BY AN UNDERSTANDABLY ANXIOUS NEIGHBOR.
MEANWHILE, UPSTAIRS, AZRAEL TOUCHES THE MAGICALLY-SEALED BEDROOM DOOR, AND THE KNOB RUSTS AND DISINTEGRATES IN HIS HAND.
THE DOOR ITSELF DOES THE SAME A MOMENT LATER.
AZRAEL STEPS ACROSS THE THRESHOLD -- ONLY TO BE STOPPED IN HIS TRACKS BY THE FEARSOME, FATAL, FLAMES OF THE FALTINE!
I'VE CHECKED HIM! BUT ALREADY, THE FLAMES ARE WEAKENING. AZRAEL IS DRAINING THEIR POWER -- AND MINE -- LIKE SOME INSATIABLE LEECH!
SUDDENLY...
<THIS IS THE POLICE!*>
<WE ARE ARMED! ANY FALSE MOVES, AND WE WILL OPEN FIRE!>
*TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH -- JO.

BY ALL MEANS, CRETINS--FIRE AWAY!
<MON DIEU! I'M HITTING HIM--I KNOW I AM-->
BOOM
<--BUT MY BULLETS HAVE NO EFFECT!>
AS PHYFFE IS NOW ONE OF THE UNDEAD, WOULD SILVER BULLETS AFFECT HIM AS THEY WOULD A VAMPIRE? IT'S SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT--
--AFTER I SAVE THOSE POLICEMEN.
BY THE AWESOME, NAMELESS RACE BY THE EVIL I ABHOR--LET MY FEARSOME FOE NOW FACE--THE ROVING RINGS OF RAGGADOR!
DENSE SMOKE BILLOWS FROM A SMOULDERING FIREPLACE...
...LEAPING ACROSS THE ROOM LIKE A THING ALIVE TO ENCASE AZRAEL IN MASSIVE MYSTIC CHAINS.
HOLD ON TIGHT, MADELEINE.
AT THE SAME TIME, STRANGE BUNDLES MADELEINE UP IN A THICK QUILT AND SPRINGS FOR THE BEDROOM WINDOW.
THIS COULD BE A VERY ROUGH LANDING.
SMASH
AS I REMEMBERED FROM LAST NIGHT, THE SIDEWALK BISTRO'S AWNING IS DIRECTLY BELOW MADELEINE'S APARTMENT. IT SHOULD CUSHION OUR FALL.
=WHOUFFF!=
RRIIIP
NO BONES BROKEN, PRAISE THE VISHANT!. BUT IT'S THE LAST TIME I TRY THIS STUNT.
THESE AWNINGS NEVER BROKE IN THE OLD DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS FILMS.

MADELEINE--RUN!
I WISH THERE WERE ANOTHER WAY, BUT I FEAR I'LL HAVE TO DEAL WITH AZRAEL...
...AS I DID WITH THE DEMONS I FOUGHT A FEW DAY AGO IN NEW YORK.*
I'VE YET TO FIND A WAY TO DEFEAT AZRAEL--AND I CAN'T AFFORD TO KEEP LOOKING RIGHT NOW. ALL I CAN DO IS BANISH HIM TEMPORARILY FROM THIS PLACE OF EXISTENCE.
*SEE DOC #38 --JO.
EVEN THAT ENCHANTMENT WILL TAKE A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF POWER--WHAT?!!
THE BUILDING WALL--IT'S COLLAPSING!!
MAKING A DESPERATE EFFORT, THE MAGE DIVES TOWARDS SAFETY.
HE DOESN'T MAKE IT.
AZRAEL...DID THIS, HE AGED BRICKS...CEMENT... UNTIL THE WALL CRUMBLED.
HERE HE... COMES TO FINISH ME OFF!
BODY PINNED--BRICKS... TOO HEAVY... CAN'T DIG MYSELF FREE...
ANY LAST WORDS, OLD ENEMY?
MORDO!
ANOTHER ASTRAL PROJECTION--MASKING AZRAEL'S FACE!
OF COURSE. I WOULDN'T MISS THIS MOMENT FOR THE WORLD.
IT WILL BE OVER BEFORE YOU KNOW IT STRANGE. AT AZRAEL'S TOUCH, YOU WILL AGE AND WITHER AND DIE AND CRUMBLE INTO DUST.
AND BARON MORDO WILL AT LAST BE TRIUMPHANT!
SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT!! THIS STORY CONTINUES IN MAN-THING #4 (ON SALE IN 30 DAYS) IT CONCLUDES IN 60 DAYS, IN DR. STRANGE #41!
WEEP FOR THE SOUL OF MAN!